

Eye Safety At Work

Is Everyone's Business.



Work-Related Eye Injury Factsheet

Each day, more than 2,000 U.S. workers receive some form of medical treatment because of eye injuries sustained at work. More than 800,000 work-related eye injuries occur annually.

Eye injuries that result in one or more days away from work (DAFW) among private-industry employees in 2004:

Number and rate

- 37,000 DAFW cases
- 4.1 DAFW cases per 10,000 full-time workers

Worker characteristics

- Men (80%)
- Workers aged 25–44 yrs (55%)

Industry of injured workers

By percentage

- Manufacturing (26%)
- Trade, transportation, & utility (24%)
- Construction (18%)

By injury rate (cases per 10,000 full-time workers)

- Construction (10.6)
- Natural resources & mining (8.6)
- Manufacturing (6.8)

Data Source: U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (www.bls.gov/iif/)

BLS conducts a survey annually of occupational injuries and illnesses among private-industry employers. BLS reports the number and rate of work-related eye injuries by worker and incident characteristics for those injuries that resulted in one or more days away from work.

Eye injuries that were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments (ED) in 2000:

Number and rate

- 300,000 ED-treated cases
- 22.2 cases per 10,000 full-time workers

Worker characteristics

- Men (80%)
- Men had an eye injury rate 4 times higher than women (32.4 vs. 8.2 cases, respectively, per 10,000 full-time workers)

Type of injury event

- Contact with object or equipment (70%)
- Exposure to harmful substances or environments (26%)

Type of injury source

- Scrap, waste, debris (34%)
- Chemicals/chemical products (14%)
- Person, plants, animals, & minerals (9%)
- Parts & materials (6%)
- Welding torches (6%)

Data Source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (www2a.cdc.gov/risqs/)

NIOSH collects information annually on occupational injuries and illnesses that were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments. NIOSH reports the number and rate of ED-treated work-related eye injuries without restrictions by type of industry, size of business, self-employment, or days away from work.

Eye Injury Prevention

- Employers should conduct an eye hazard evaluation of the worksite.
- Where possible, eye hazards should be removed by using engineering controls.
- Employers should have the appropriate safety eye protection at the worksite. Eye protection should be marked with ANSI Z87.
- Workers should use safety eye protection at all times and employers should enforce its use.

Prevention Resources

- Healthy Vision 2010 www.healthyvision2010.org/
- NIOSH Eye Safety www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/eye
1-800-35-NIOSH
- National Safety Council www.nsc.org/
- OSHA Eye and Face Protection eTool www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/eyeandface/index.html